

CHAPTER 1

“Ah, there you are my darling little sister, I’ve been looking everywhere for you.” Oscar slung his arm over his twin sister’s shoulder and gave her a friendly squeeze. Olivia brushed him off and carried her basket of fresh flowers to the old worn table in a corner of the kitchen and reached for an empty vase. She began cutting the stems as she waited for whatever scheme her brother wanted to talk to her about. She already knew it would not be good.

“What do you want, Oscar?” she asked as she placed the flowers in a pleasing arrangement before turning her attention to her brother.

“Just wanted to inform you I am having a few friends over tonight—possibly for a few nights actually.” Before Olivia could open her mouth to protest, Oscar placed one finger over her lips to silence her.

“I just informed Cook about the dinner arrangements and have maids preparing rooms in the west wing. Far from your rooms so we won’t disturb you.”

Swatting his hand away she huffed in irritation. “Mother knew you would do this. That is why she asked me stay here while she was away. So you wouldn’t turn the house into a den of, of, debauchery.

“Debauchery? Really Olivia. It’s just a few of my friends for cards and liquor. No debauching of any sort I assure you.” Oscar, Viscount Mansfield, laughed aside her misgivings.

Turning back to her flowers, she asked, “Whom did you invite?”

“Hemsworth, Barkly, Weston, and Warrington.”

Olivia nearly overturned the vase when he mentioned Warrington. Jackson Laughtry, Earl of Warrington: he was far too attractive for her own good and he was to be staying in her mother’s house for a few days, and nights. She would be dining with him—them—tonight, and a few more nights. She wanted to hang her head in shame as a stab of longing made her thighs quiver.

“Have you given no thought to my reputation?” she asked him.

“Olivia,” he turned her to face him and pulled her into a hug. “You’re not exactly an innocent. You have been widowed for two years and you are so young and pretty you can easily attract another husband. These are fine men.” He winced slightly before adding, “Well, mostly anyway. Your maid can sleep in your dressing room for a few nights and you can lock your door at night if it makes you feel better.”

“Janie snores,” was her only reply. Wonderful. With Janie sleeping only a thin door away she wouldn’t have the privacy that her new hobby required. She turned away before he could see the blush spreading across her cheeks and surveyed her finished arrangement. She adjusted a spray of fern, then picked up the vase and carried it out of the room. Oscar followed her.

“So, the men will be here this evening. It’s completely informal so you won’t even need to act as hostess. Just be beautiful for dinner and you can excuse yourself right after and entertain yourself how you wish.”

Whirling around she asked, “What does that mean?” Her voice sounded shrill even to her own ears and Oscar looked taken aback by the sharpness in her voice.

Shaking his head as if confused he said, “Gardening, sewing, reading—your normal pursuits. I promise, you won’t even realize they’re here. Thanks, sis.” He gave her an affectionate kiss on her cheek then quit the room to prepare for his guests.

* * *

Olivia surveyed her reflection in the mirror, as Janie adjusted a pin in her hair. The deep burgundy of her gown showed a bit too much of her ample bosom, but a curl of her long dark hair hung down and obscured at least some of it. The pearl and ruby pendant she wore around her neck would distract from it, too, she hoped. She could remarry. She was only twenty-two, and quite wealthy to boot.

She closed her eyes and tried to summon an image of Tommy and found she could not quite do it. She tried to remember the feelings she had after his death but could not really remember them, either. Both seemed like memories of memories. Taking a deep breath, she rose and thanked Janie for doing an excellent job and pasted on a smile that seemed to stop at her nose, then left her room to join the gentlemen for dinner.

As Oscar sat at the head of the table, Olivia seated herself to his right as she looked around at her brother's closest friends. They were a raucous bunch, providing jokes and amusing conversation throughout the meal. Viscount Barkly was seated to her right. He was handsome, she supposed, shorter than her brother and the other men, but he was stocky and solid and had an air of command that made him difficult to ignore.

The Earl of Hemsworth sat across from him. He was the quietest of the bunch, his face impassive except for his eyes, which hinted at his amusement. He wore his blond hair long and tied back with a leather thong, unusual but very attractive with his bright blue eyes.

Marquis Weston sat beside him, a laughing, merry counterpart to Hemsworth's reserve. He was slight of build, with light brown hair and gingerbread tinted eyes neatly framed by wire rimmed spectacles, and possessed an unlimited well of energy, seeming to always be in motion even when seated. He was quick to laugh and always good with a joke.

Much to her chagrin she found herself seated across from Lord Warrington. She watched him as he talked and found herself mesmerized by his expressive use of his hands as he told a story about some of his antics from his school days. She was sure the men were censoring themselves out of respect to the lady at the table, but their tales were certainly not suitable for an unmarried girl to hear. She did enjoy conversations much more as a widow. She was privy to the best gossip and wonderfully lurid details from the older married women at balls and other events. She had heard juicy tidbits about all the men at the table over the last few years, unfortunately, even about her brother on occasion.

She laughed with the group and finished her second glass of wine, discreetly covering the top to indicate to the footman she did not need more. She turned her attention away from the ridiculously handsome man and listened to another schoolboy scrape from Barkly that, again, had the table roaring with merriment.

Once dinner was finished, she bid the men a good evening and excused herself, not noticing the eyes of four men on her retreating figure and the one set of eyes watching the reactions of his friends.

Once back in her rooms, Janie helped her remove her gown and slip into a soft, comfortable, sleeveless cotton nightgown, took down her hair, braided it, and settled her into bed. Olivia sipped tea and tried to read her book. *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austin used to be one of her favorites until her shameful new obsession began. Mr. Darcy simply wasn't as interesting as her dinner companion—companions, she reminded herself with a frustrated shake of her head.

She sat and listened to the rustle of cloth and the opening and closing of drawers from her dressing room until it went quiet. Olivia allowed her eyes to close and she pictured him, Lord

Warrington, as the main character of her new favorite book with her as the object of his desire. She felt a shameful, but exciting, rush of need between her legs. She shifted and pressed her legs together tightly and felt the feelings intensify. Still she listened for the telltale sounds of her sleeping maid from the small dressing room cot.

It seemed an eternity, but could not have been more than half an hour for her tea was still slightly warm, when she heard what she had been waiting for. Snoring. She smiled and shook her head as she slid out of her bed. How such a big, loud sound could come from such a small, quiet girl, she would never understand.

She knelt next to her bed and reached under it to produce a small locked box. Feeling beneath her mattress she found the key and unlocked it. She could not resist a guilty look over her shoulder before perusing its contents. She selected a few favorites and placed them on the bed before relocking the box and returning it and its key to their former places. She stood and reached for her old, warm dressing robe, put it on, tied the sash, slipped her evening's entertainment into the robe's deep pockets, picked up her lamp as quietly as she could, and left her bedchamber.

Certain her brother and his friends would contain themselves to the west wing of the large rambling country house, she crept down to the kitchen, found a small basket, and filled it with food left over from dinner and a clean glass, then made her way down several more steps to the wine cellar.

Remembering to prop the door open with the small piece of wood left there for that purpose, she walked quickly through the rows filled with bottles of fine wine, port, sherry, and even a few bottles of champagne, to a small alcove hidden behind the shelves. Settling her lamp on the side table and putting down her basket, she wandered the shelves looking for what she wanted. Selecting a bottle of port, she returned to her cozy hide-away and arranged everything to her liking. She removed the cork from the bottle and poured a glass, then she pulled the books from the robe pockets and selected one, laying the others on the table before sitting back on the old chaise she had found in here years ago. She made herself comfortable, took a sip of the heady wine and she began to read.

* * *

Jack watched his money being raked across the table for the third consecutive time and realized if he kept this up he would be out of betting money before the night was through. His mind simply wasn't in the game. He listened with half an ear as his friends told stories of a more recent and more ribald nature than those told at the dinner table as he contemplated the woman who had tempered the previous discussion.

"That's it for me tonight, gentlemen," Jack said, standing and collecting his small stack of coins. He stretched and yawned then apologized with a shrug and an excuse about too many late nights. After promising to win back his money the following night, he took his leave of his friends. On his way to his room, he decided to rummage through the kitchen for a snack. Then he remembered the wine cellar kept by his friend and decided another glass of wine would help relax his mind. He walked down the steps to the heavy door. Finding it ajar he opened it and kicked a small piece of wood away, allowing it to close behind him. He was in near total darkness. It would have been complete if a small light had not been shining from behind the shelves. Curious, he walked around the wall of wood and wine looking for the source of the light.

Jack turned the corner in time to see a lady in a small ring of light standing and hastily retying the sash of her dressing gown. It only took a moment to realize he had just walked into

the very woman who had been haunting him all evening. At dinner, she was dazzling perfection. However, now, with her hair pulled back in a soft braid with loose tendrils floating around her shoulders in the simplicity of her bedroom attire, she looked soft and womanly and approachable, so he approached her.

The closer he came, the more flustered she seemed to become. She picked up a small basket and placed it over a short pile of books as if she were trying to hide them from his sight. His curiosity became more aroused as he smelled the subtle sent of feminine musk. Casting around he did not see anyone else nor did there appear to be anywhere for a clandestine lover to hide. He concluded she was alone. His eyebrow quirked up in question and even in the dim light, he saw her furious blush.

“What are you doing here?” she asked with a small squeak in her voice. Then she seemed to have a sudden thought.

“Oh no, please no you didn’t...” She didn’t finish the sentence, but grabbed the lantern and ran around the wine racks toward the door, then stopped short.

He was worried he had truly frightened her, being a man and she a woman alone, but discovered that wasn’t it at all.

She turned to him, furious. “You closed the door!” she accused him.

“There was a piece of wood, I kicked it out of the way that’s all,” he defended himself, completely bewildered by her reaction.

“You kicked away the wood. It was holding the door ajar because there is no handle on this side. We’re stuck in here. What are you doing down here?” she asked again.

“I couldn’t concentrate on the game so I walked away. I remembered your brother mentioning the fine wines off the kitchen and thought to grab a bottle to take to bed with me.” He didn’t mention that she was why he couldn’t focus and why he wanted to numb his mind a little.

“I thought all you men drank scotch or brandy. Surely there was enough of that for you.” She gave a small huff as she walked back to her cozy nook. She carefully placed the lamp on yet another book, effectively hiding the cover from him, and tossed a lap blanket over the seat of the small couch she had been reclining on.

He really wanted to see those books, but kept his curiosity in check for now, saying instead, “I don’t like scotch or brandy much. Why are you down here?” Her blush burned so hot on her face he began to worry she might burst into flames right before his eyes.

“My maid snores. I couldn’t sleep,” she answered quickly.

She looked almost guilty. Jack was intrigued by her response. It was like she had already thought of a cover story.

“Since we’re locked in here together, may I sit?” he asked, indicating the seat next to her. She looked uncomfortable, but nodded consent. He sat on the far side and leaned away from her to try to lessen her discomfort, and see the spine of the books she was trying so hard to conceal, but the shadows hindered him. He stretched out his long legs and relaxed into his corner as he studied her.

“Why is there no handle on this side?”

“It fell off years ago. It’s been on the list of things to take care of, but we have gotten so used to propping it open we just forgot about it. Old habits and all.”

She was rambling, from her nerves he guessed.

“What time is it? Do you have a watch on you?”

He pulled a silver pocket watch from his waistcoat, remembering he had left his binding coat and cravat in the card room, and checked it in the lamplight.

"It's two thirty in the morning," he informed her.

She sat forward placing her elbows on her knees and put her face in her hands and as she thought. "All right, Cook will be in the kitchen by six to start baking the day's bread. We can pound on the door and she will let us out." She turned her head to look at him. "Don't worry, she won't say anything to anyone and we can be back in our beds before anyone knows we were not where we were supposed to be."

"How can you be sure she won't tell? Aren't servants supposed to be horrid gossips?" he asked with a joking smile curling his lips.

"She has worked for my family since before I was born and no one even knows her name." Olivia responded with a small smile of her own. "She won't tell." Shaking off her nervousness she resigned herself to being alone with the man she had just envisioned while she was... Oh dear!

"So how about that wine?" She refilled the glass with the fine port and offered it to him. "I only brought one glass so we will have to share, unless you want the bottle?" He took the glass she handed him and drank some. It went down smooth and warm. He drank some more and handed it back to her.

"Do you mind if I make myself more comfortable?" he asked. She waved off the question as if she had no concerns about him being partially undressed. He unbuttoned his waistcoat and shrugged out of it laying it aside then began the arduous task of removing his well-worn hessians then settled back and breathed a deep sigh of relief as the wine worked through him.

"You sound like me when I can finally remove my corset each night." She sat back, relaxing along with him. She turned her whole body sideways to face him, tucking her feet up under her robe, but not before he saw a flash of her bare little toes.

"Are you hungry? I have some vittles left over from dinner and some of Cook's apple tarts, I think." She passed him the small basket without realizing she had uncovered her naughty little secret. She looked down and saw what she had done and tried to snatch back the basket but he held it out of reach and instead made a grab for the books while she was distracted.

"Oh no, please don't." But of course, it was too late.

He read the titles. "*A Night in the Sultan's Harem.*" He again cocked up that eyebrow and gave her a conspiratorial grin. "*The Pirate's Doxy.* Which one were you reading when I disturbed you?" His eyes sparkled with merriment as she wrapped her arms around her knees and buried her face in embarrassment. She was caught and she knew it.

He moved the lamp and nearly laughed aloud. "*The Amorous Adventures of a Lusty Barron.* One of my favorites as well." She looked up warily then laughed at how silly she was being. She was a widow, not an innocent schoolgirl. She could read what she wanted. She leaned back again.

"You won't tell, will you?" she asked tensely.

"Of course not. Your secrets are safe with me." He leaned slightly closer to her. "As are you, Lady Carter," he told her in complete seriousness. "You're a young, healthy woman. I would imagine after two years of widowhood you must miss the pleasures you enjoyed in your marriage bed."

At his words her whole demeanor changed from laughing embarrassment to what was it, guilt? She pulled back into herself and he couldn't help but wonder why.

“Well,” he said placing her naughty books back on the table and folding his fingers together behind his head. “We have hours to kill and not much to do besides drink, eat, and talk. So, tell me about the books. How did you find them? Surely you didn’t buy them yourself.”

She took another drink of the wine then looked at him as if trying to gage how much she could tell him.

“I don’t gossip either, my lady. You can tell me anything. I give you my word as a gentleman. Nothing you reveal to me shall be spoken to anyone.”

“I suppose under the circumstances you can call me Olivia.”

“Excellent, and you can call me Jack. Now talk.”

“Do you know how sheltered young girls are, Jack? I met my Tommy in my first season when I was eighteen and was married soon after. I went to my marriage bed completely unaware of what was going to happen. My mother tried to talk to me about it, but it all came down to ‘Your husband will show you’. Don’t misunderstand me, I learned to enjoy my husband’s attentions very much. The kissing, and touching, the act itself, but I felt like I was missing something. He had an, I don’t know, an intensity I could feel in every inch of his body. Then after, he was perfectly relaxed and satisfied. I never felt that.” She looked away then and he saw the flush spreading up her face as her blush returned. “Until two months ago, when I found the books.” She emptied the glass and Jack leaned over to refill it with the last of the bottle, then took a drink and set the glass down before her.

“Mother told me she was going to Scotland to visit her mother’s family for the summer and wanted me here to try to keep Jack from doing anything too wild, and I was lonely, so I agreed. I went into the attic to look for something and found Oscar’s old school trunk. There were books and I have always loved reading, but my goodness, I never had read anything like that before. I didn’t even know things like that were written. The books made me burn, and throb and—I touched myself.” She confessed nearly in a whisper. “It felt so good and the book was so exciting I couldn’t stop and that night I felt it. The most blissful feeling I ever had. I finally understood. Since then I can’t seem to get enough.”

“Stop there,” he commanded as he scooted closer to her and took her small cool hand in his much larger one. “First off, you and your husband were both very young and had such a short time together. I am sure that given more time you would have learned each other better and he would have given you your release. Second, half the boys at Eaton probably experienced their first orgasm from that same book.”

“Really, do you think so?” she asked eagerly, now grasping his hand back.

“I did, and your brother probably did, too.”

She laughed aloud at that, shaking her head at the information. “I don’t want to know any more about my brother doing that.” She was still laughing.

“So,” he said, and picked up *The Amorous Adventures of the Lusty Baron*, then looked back to her, “what is your favorite part? What makes you go over?” He flipped through the pages looking for what parts it fell open to. “Oh, that’s my favorite part, too.” He looked closely at her as he described the scene to her—the lusty baron and the serving girl who was over his lap and having her bottom spanked. He could tell from the look in her eyes that he was correct.

“Do people really do that? Is it enjoyable? Too be spanked?” She leaned closer, eager for his answer. He looked at the blazing curiosity in her dark eyes and thought about how to answer her. He decided to be truthful and hope she didn’t slap him.

“I have been thinking about you bent over my lap since you walked in to dinner. Your voluptuous figure, so tightly bound and corseted. I haven’t been able to think about anything all night except how you would look, unbound, unpinned.”

She didn’t slap him, nor did she remove her hand from his so he continued. “I wondered if you would scream and cry and think me a beast or if you would gasp and moan and squirm against me letting me do what I want. You’re so confident and strong, I haven’t stopped wondering if you would be strong enough, brave enough, to submit to me. To allow me to dominate you and make you burn for me, and I have wanted to taste you all night.” Then he did something that truly shocked her. He brought her hand up and sucked two of her fingers into his mouth.

He was right about another thing, too. He could taste her on them. His tongue circled and licked every last bit of the flavor from the fingers she had used earlier to pleasure herself.

Her breath was fast and her chest rose and fell in a most enticing manner. Moving carefully, he slid his free hand down to the sash of her robe and tugged on it until the knot loosened and her robe fell open. Her night-rail was cut low and loose for comfort, but he wanted to see so much more of her.

“I want to try something, an experiment if you like. I promise not to do anything that might have consequences. I’ll stop if you ask me, but let me try.”

His voice was low, sensual, and it wrapped around her like a warm blanket. She wanted to beg him to do anything, anything at all, but she fought it for just a moment.

“You speak of strength and bravery.” Her desire made her sound breathy and sultry and Jack felt his cock harden to an almost unbearable degree, but he ignored it. “Does it take strength to allow someone to control you?”

“It’s not about controlling you, it’s about freeing you. Freeing you to just feel and not have to think; it’s about being able to just let go.” Somehow, they had moved closer. His arms were around her waist and her hands were on his neck and his back. They melted into a kiss, her mouth open beneath his, her tongue tangled with his, their moans mingling on their shared breath.

One hand moved down to free her breasts from the soft cotton. He wanted to feel the softer skin it concealed. Her breast filled his hand and he felt her nipple harden as his palm rubbed over it. He squeezed hard, making her gasp. He moved to kiss her neck, then lower to take the sore bud in his mouth. He licked and suckled it while he pinched her other nipple even harder. She responded by putting her hand to the back of his head to bring him closer. Her other hand rested on his and he smiled against her and pinched her again, this time rolling the abused bud between his fingers.

She threw her head back and groaned. Oh, dear God, she loved this.

He pulled back from her, his breath rapid, the blood rushing through his body heating him. She looked magnificent, her color was high, her eyes glazed with passion, her lips parted, red and full from their kisses.

He moved the table out of the way, careful not to upset the lamp and needing some time to gather himself before he disgraced himself like the fourteen-year-old boy he had been when he had first read that book. He stood and pulled her against him. He kissed her again and slid her robe off her body. As it fell to her feet, he pulled away to better see her. Clad only in her thin cotton nightgown he could see her silhouette, all curvy and lush. She was perfect.

He sat down on the edge of the couch, then said, “Lie across my lap.”

She stood uncertain for just a moment, then moved to place herself over his legs and into his care.

“Put your hands and feet on the floor and keep them there.” He adjusted her position to his liking then dropped one hand to the hem of her gown and slipped his fingers under it. His hand moved up slowly bringing the gown with it. God, she was so soft everywhere he touched. He finally bared her bottom, fleshy and heart shaped. He rubbed her pale globes then gave her a light swat. He heard her sigh and watched a light pink splash of color appear. He smacked her again, several light warm up strikes that made her moan. He slapped her harder, over and over, working to cover every inch of her backside to a bright blush. When he thought she was ready for more he really set in, truly spanking her now, bringing her up to a nice shade of scarlet. She kicked her legs and she thrashed against him in the most maddening way. He stopped before she made him come just from that.

His hand went between her legs and she opened them eagerly. He slipped his hand against her and was rewarded as a rush of her liquid desire positively drenched him. He slipped one finger into her and her inner muscles clenched him fiercely, so he added another and worked inside her until he found a rhythm that made her shout out.

“Yes, oh yes Jack.”

He reached around to rub her clit. It was small but he found the buried root of it under the skin and using two fingers he rubbed firmly against her. His other hand continued to fill her, fucking her hard with three fingers now. She was going to come. He could feel it as she thrashed against him. He could hear it as her moans filled his head like the most beautiful music. Suddenly he felt her convulse around his fingers as she let go. He allowed his own release now as he really didn't have much of a choice. Her response, so pure and true and primal, sent him over with her.

He pulled her up and held her close to him, gently rubbing her burning bottom, trying to soothe her. She cried against his shirt. He didn't mind. He knew it was not regret or even pain. He knew she was simply overwhelmed, so he held her and tried to figure out what the hell he was going to do now. After the way she bore the pain and responded to him, how was he ever going to let her go?

She must have fallen asleep, she reasoned, as she opened her eyes and slowly became aware of her situation. She was laying on her side curled up on her comfortable old couch while Lord Warrington, no Jack, she corrected herself with a satisfied smile, sat on the floor with his back against the edge of her couch and his long legs stretched out before him. He was reading her pilfered copy of *A Night in the Sultan's Harem*.

“What time is it?” she asked as she ran her fingers through his thick, dark hair. He turned to look at her and found her hand where it neared his neck and entwined his fingers with hers as he turned to face her. He was smiling and she wanted to purr like a kitten when he gently kissed her fingers.

“Just after five,” he answered her. “I was going to give you a few more minutes to sleep before waking you up. How do you feel?” She pulled her hand from his and sat up, wincing slightly as she did so.

“My bottom is sore, but the rest of me feels wonderful,” she said with a shy grin.

“That is to be expected, after what you endured,” he said with a touch of concern in his voice. Then his face softened as the memories of their interlude washed over him.

“Perhaps this evening I’ll steel you away somewhere private and spank you again just before dinner. I can watch you squirm in your chair as you try to find a comfortable position.” A devilish gleam came into his eyes as he pictured the scene.

“Our own little secret?” she joked, as she stretched and yawned in a most unladylike way. He stood and offered her a hand up. She adjusted her nightgown then reached for her robe, and he sat down to pull his boots on. While she donned her robe and was retying the sash, he put on his waistcoat. She noticed a spot on his trousers. Her face flushed as she realized what it must be. He had spent in his pants while she had thrashed around... oh goodness. Her face burned as much as her bottom had, remembering what he had done to her. The liberties she had not just allowed, but had relished.

Noticing the direction of her gaze he looked down and tugged at his waistcoat in an effort to conceal the stain. “It seemed the safest option at the time. We don’t want any unwanted consequences, do we? Well, I think we can call this a successful experiment, don’t you?” he asked trying to set her at ease once more. She giggled, then laughed again, rubbing her bottom.

“Very successful, I am truly a wanton degenerate.” She tried for humor but it came out more like self-reproach. She tried to turn away from him, shame slowly stealing her former enjoyment, threatening to turn it into guilt over her response. As if Jack could sense the turmoil of her inner thoughts, he pulled her around and into his arms. He held her tight and gently rubbed her back in soothing circles, offering her the comfort she so needed right then.

“You did nothing wrong, Olivia. What happened between us is just that, between us. Your response to me was a gift. Do not feel ashamed. I won’t allow it.” He released her long enough to check his watch by the light of the lamp light, then pulled her to the couch until she was once more cradled in his lap.

“You’re not the first woman to get pain and pleasure confused in your body.” He gently stroked her hair, her back, and bottom as he spoke. “Why do you think those books were written?” He hesitated then came to a decision. “Let me come to you tonight.”

“But my maid...”

“Snores. You barely got a wink of sleep last night because of it.” He was rewarded with another giggle. “She can go back to her room and you will be perfectly safe with your door locked and the men on the other side of the house. No one but us will know. There is so much I want to teach you, experience with you. And you need to learn more, too. Let me in Olivia. Let me come to you tonight.”

A *yes* hovered on her lips but her voicing it aloud was forestalled by noises coming from the kitchen above them. Cook was up, and so was their time together. Hurriedly, she placed the used glass into the basket, slipped her books back into her pockets, grabbed the lamp and hurried off around the wine rack as Jack picked up the basket and followed her. She pounded on the door and heard the scuff of feet coming down the stairs.

“Yes or no, Olivia, tell me now?” Jack asked.

“Yes, come to me tonight. I’ll keep the door unlocked, just come in.” By the time she finished speaking, the door swung open revealing the startled face of the long-time family cook.

“Oh thank goodness Cook, we have been locked down there forever.” Olivia placed an affectionate kiss on Cook’s plump cheek and rushed off. Jack handed Cook the basket and rushed after Olivia. They quickly made their way up the stairs and paused at the top. In a gallant gesture, Jack took her hand and brought it to his lips and kissed her fingers. Releasing her, he gave her a nod and a smile then they turned their separate ways and crept quietly to their rooms.

Olivia woke at the crack of noon after turning Janie away at nine using the excuse Jack had provided her. She had rolled over and crashed back into an exhausted dreamless sleep. Now she woke up feeling refreshed, but still a bit sore. Taking advantage of her temporary privacy, she rose and went to the tall, standing mirror in the corner. She turned around and lifted the back of her gown.

Looking over her shoulder she saw her bottom, now faded to a light pink. She caressed her sore globes with a pale hand marveling at the difference in color. It wasn't a dream; it hadn't been a fantasy. She had quite willingly placed herself over his knees and allowed him to spank her then bring her to the most shattering, satisfying climax she'd ever felt. Much better than any she had given herself. And he was coming to her tonight. She should have felt embarrassed, indignant even, over his rough treatment of her—probably even insulted that he thought she would consent to it again. But the tingle between her legs and the wild thumping of her heart told her otherwise. She wanted him. She wanted more.

She dropped her gown to cover herself just as she heard the sound of her dressing room door sliding open. She asked Janie to bring a small meal. Once she left, Olivia quickly removed her nightgown, gave herself a hurried wash and donned her undergarments before Janie returned. After she ate, Janie helped her into her hated corset—though a more comfortable one than the night before—and a pale green day dress, then left to begin her day. Thankfully she had much to do to keep herself occupied so she didn't have much time to think. Thinking was bad, for her mind would simply drift back to the wine cellar. Tonight, she reminded herself happily. She just had to make it through today.